JULY
AUGUST
1967

WRL NEWS

Published by the War Resisters League, 5 Beekman Street, New York 10038, N.Y., U.S. branch of the War Resisters International, a pacifist organization with affiliates in 53 countries. Ralph Di Gia, Administrative Secretary; David McReynolds, Field Secretary; Jim Peck, Editor. No. 144

OCTOBER 21 . . .

. . . is the date for the—hopefully—biggest demonstration against the Vietnam war. It will take place in Washington, D.C., and will be coordinated by National Mobilization, successor to Spring Mobilization, which assembled the record setting marches in New York and San Francisco on April 15. October 21 will climax six days of protest action in the nation's capital which will be set off on . . .

. . . OCTOBER 16 . . .

. . . when a group of young men from all parts of the country will hand in their draft cards and refuse any further cooperation with Selective Service. This action is being coordinated by The Resistance, a recently organized group which is headquartered in the WRL office.

FORMER SPU LEADER IS WRL YOUTH SECRETARY

Joseph Kearns, who for the past year and a half was secretary of the Student Peace Union, has been named youth secretary of WRL.

SPU recently voted to merge with the Independent Student Union and its office space at WRL presently is occupied by The Resistance, which is mobilizing for the October 16 draft card demonstration in Washington.

Kearns will coordinate the League's youth program and will take charge of the special WRL youth mailing list. His initial assignments were to attend the assembly of the University Christian Movement and the convention of Students for a Democratic Society.

PROTEST TEXAS MURDER

WRLers are urged to write Chief of Police, Austin, Texas and Attorney General Ramsey Clark, Department of Justice, Washington, D.C., demanding a full investigation of the murder of George Vizard, an active peace worker. He was shot to death on July 23 in the cold storage locker of an Austin drive-in grocery where he worked.

In warning Vizard to stop his peace activities, local police had told him that they could not be responsible for his life. He had been threatened by the local John Birch Society.

NEW WEST COAST SECRETARY

David Harris, who has been active in organizing draft resistance, has been named secretary of the Western Region WRL. Robert Meriwether is the new office manager. The office—in San Francisco—has moved to *514 Mission Street.*

WRL ROLE IN L.A. DEMONSTRATION

photo and story by Paul Encimer

On June 23, the day of the big Los Angeles anti-Johnson demonstration and the police onslaught, WRL-LA took responsibility for manning the morning picket line at the Century Plaza Hotel. We expected trouble with the police but until late afternoon there were more newsmen on the scene than policemen. By 4 o'clock, most of the WRL pickets had gone to the peace-in at nearby Cheviot Hills Park being replaced with fresh reinforcements from the park.

In the march, which was sponsored by a coalition group and which started at 7:30 WRLers participated as individuals. Many were assigned as monitors. Being in front of the line, they experienced the brunt of the attack by helmeted police armed with clubs at about 9:30.

For most of our group, it was a first experience with violent repression—though it was minor in comparison to what is happening in the ghettos—not to speak of Vietnam. Safford Chamberlain, a WRLer, was among the 20-or-so demonstrators arrested.

Leafleting at Induction Center

Local Army officials have reacted to our leafleting campaign at the induction center by refusing to allow anyone to enter with leaflets in their possession. Several inductions as well as pre-induction physicals have been postponed as much as a month because of the leafleting.

As we leaflet, we are familiarizing ourselves with Army schedules which will prove important as we step-up our campaign at the induction center in the coming weeks.

DANILO DOLCI . . .

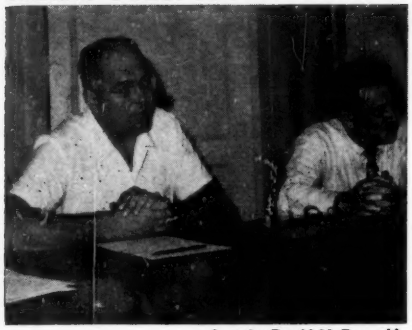

photo by David McReynolds

. . . nonviolent protest leader in poverty-stricken, Mafia-ridden Sicily and WRL Chairman Edward Gottlieb at June 22 gathering in New York. Dolci was on his way to a conference in Montevideo for discussing extension of Gandhian techniques to Latin America.

In the course of the meeting, he noted that WRL is one of the "fathers of the dam." He was referring to the Iato River dam in western Sicily which finally was constructed following his 10-day fast and supporting demonstrations in many parts of Italy, in London, Rome, Oslo, Paris—and New York. The New York demonstration, at the Italian Consulate, was conducted by WRL on November 4, 1962.

Many people are working on Vietnam this summer. That means a stepped-up effort to stop the war—and WRL is doing its part. A number of groups have been placing quantity orders for our literature. We have augmented our staff by one youth secretary.

We need some summer dollars. To those who responded to our June appeal—many thanks. For WRLers in that category who can afford a little extra and for WRLers who did not respond, we enclose a business reply envelope.

ENROLLMENT BLANK

Send to War Resisters League
5 Beekman Street, New York 38, N. Y.

WAR IS A CRIME AGAINST HUMANITY.
I THEREFORE AM DETERMINED NOT TO SUPPORT ANY KIND OF WAR, INTERNATIONAL OR CIVIL, AND TO STRIVE FOR THE REMOVAL OF ALL THE CAUSES OR WAR.

signature

address

city *state*

occupation *age*

WHAT CAN I DO TO END THIS WAR

(Editor's Note: That is the title of our latest leaflet which you received in our June mailing. Many WRLers ordered more—20 for $1, 100 for $3. Others wrote to tell what they are doing. Here are a few excerpts.)

from Don Pease, Hanover, N.H.

I thought you would be interested in the fact that we have undertaken to reprint and distribute your "Up Tight With The Draft." The Manchester Union Leader, New Hampshire's most reactionary and most influential newspaper has responded with a lengthy hostile editorial naming the five local draft counselors (including myself) whose names appear in our edition of the pamphlet and blasting David McReynolds for his authorship.

from Mrs. Ruth Pool, Seattle, Wash.

To answer the question regarding what one can do, I begin my day with letter-writing to community leaders and especially to Social Concern chairmen of various denominations. Lately, I discovered that the Women of the Lutheran Church in America is putting out a splendid kit on China and Vietnam. That meant calling pastors and inquiring as to whether each church was using this kit. I'm also circulating kits of my own in my neighborhood. All this may amount to little, but it is something for a person who finds walking demonstrations too strenuous.

from Gary Wright, Missoula, Montana

You might be interested to know that even here in cowboy country, after several years of sincere though disorganized efforts, a group of about 20 University of Montana students, professors and friendly dropouts are organizing a Peace Center. In addition to continuing speaking programs and manning of peace tables on campus, we will start systematic anti-draft work—something new in this state. Draft counselors are being trained, demonstrations at Butte's induction center are being planned and the local ACLU is being contacted for legal aid.

from a student at the University of Houston (Texas)

We have set up tables on campus and on the streets with signs saying: "Please take out a few minutes to vote for peace with a letter to Johnson, Yarborough, Tower or McNamara." We average more than 1 letter signed every 5 minutes. We have a typewriter on each table for those who would prefer to write their own letter rather than sign the prepared one.

from Valida Davila, Escondido, Calif.

"Old Dolls for Peace" is my answer to what we "dolls" can do. The project, headquartered at my home consists of knitting garments for Vietnamese children. They must be in dark colors for camouflage and to protect the children from U.S. flares which are attracted to light colors. Persons interested in participating or in getting further details can write me at 1909 Glenridge Rd., Escondido, California 92025. I also participate in vigils at San Diego county coastal towns.

ATLANTA'S FIRST REPORT

In the 4½ months since the Atlanta Workshop in Nonviolence started, it has made some significant accomplishments in what is by northern standards a very conservative city.

Atlanta has a weekly vigil. 8 to 15 people have stood at a busy intersection downtown for an hour a week for 18 weeks now. Over 40 people are involved. Many passers-by pick up our leaflets every week (we use a different one each time) and ask for extra copies for their friends.

Atlanta has had 4 major demonstrations—an all-night vigil before the Easter sunrise service followed by leafleting to 9300 people; a mass picketing of Vice President Humphrey; a picket demonstration at Lockheed Aircraft Corporation's open house on Armed Forces Day; and picketing of a Ku Klux Klan prowar rally. Georgia sent more than 65 people to the April 15 Mobilization in New York. Through a newly formed alliance with civil rights organizations and other peace groups we are working on what may be the south's largest peace demonstration—a march and rally on Hiroshima Day.

Now that the weekly vigil is successful without a lot of extra work, we are considering turning it over to the alliance and starting another. We hope that the alliance will handle more of the planning of major demonstrations, allowing us to work in two critical areas: widespread recruiting through a massive program of draft education and counseling; and a more direct confrontation with the war system.

The young people of Atlanta are the largest untapped group of opponents to the Vietnam war here, and our initial experience with the program indicates that this will be the way to involve them. Draft resistance is potentially the most effective way of stopping the war. Though our program is just beginning, the number of young people who appear for demonstrations and for CO counseling has already tripled.

Persons who want a summary of the basic changes in the new draft law can obtain same from WRL by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope.

Civil Disobedience—NOW

by Edward Gottlieb
Chairman, WRL Resisters League

Long before our Vietnam misadventure became our national tragedy, the War Resisters League distributed a very challenging and cogent leaflet entitled "Our Dirty War." After the French debacle it should have made sense to all America and we should have pulled out our advisors. We were not yet being defeated by a country, even lower in the power class than Finland, 1939. But as Pareto pointed out—in social relations, we are too often neither logical nor illogical but rather non-logical. In our inter-nation affairs we think with our tribal blood and respond with ritual rather than with reason. Our WRL leaflet therefore, no matter how convincing to our pacifist coterie or to our neighbors abroad, was able to move very few Americans toward any action or witness for peace.

We pacifists had to do it ourselves, and to start at the beginning, placing our bodies in the streets for every one to see that there was at least a tiny voice of dissent. The peace walks and marches grew, a columnist here and there ventured to question, a senator or representative spoke out. Protest was abroad in the land but apathy and complacency were too well cushioned to enable any response other than a sneer.

The jeers were yet to come, but only after we attacked our fellow American "below the belt," at the level of his sleepy conscience. Pacifists do "fight dirty"; they use spiritual weapons. They made their first sortie at civil disobedience, a Declaration of Conscience which invited prosecution under the Espionage Act. For much less, Eugene Victor Debs had been sentenced to twenty years in prison. But nothing happened to us, so we took the Declaration to Washington and on Hiroshima Day 1965 sat down in front of the White House. Only about 60 settled in the hot sun that first day, but three days later over 300 persons sat down in front of the Capitol and were carried into paddy wagons marking the biggest mass arrest in Washington history. Our dialogue with the American people had begun.

Appeal to Conscience

It is true that we are few but whenever we move our witness to the fine point of conscience, we draw an ever wider base of dissent and protest against the horrendous sin of Vietnam. It may well be that the curve of protest, driven ever higher by Alice Herz, Norman Morrison, and Roger LaPorte, acts to protest Dow's napalm and Vertol's helicopters, David Miller and David Mitchell, draft card burners and now The Resistance has already reached the point of political significance that will condition the decisions toward de-escalation. Glassboro may have been just such revelation and one very sophisticated reporter could only interpret Kosygin's mild response to de Gaulle on Vietnam as indicating that a basic agreement had been reached in Kosygin's extended joy-talk with President Johnson. But, however close we may be to the withdrawal process from Vietnam, we pacifists must continue to escalate our appeal to the Conscience of America.

There is nothing in our history or tradition that can justify our present war against a small Asian nation, so we need but to catch the attention of our fellow American for an hour or two before his own conscience will do a job on him. Our speeches need not be masterpieces of oratory. The debate in fact may be very inadequate, as it was before the 1200 teachers in the Delegate Assembly of the Teachers Union. Yet a prediction of 3 to 1 for Meany and Johnson turned into a victory and protest vote on Vietnam over and above the exhortations of the union's president and leadership. We must get people to think and feel it through for themselves—but they, must first feel. And they will—even as their thinking is marshaled against our arguments and even more their emotions against our acts of civil disobedience.

A First-hand Experience

Another indication of this psychological process came home to me very recently on the Stanford campus. Jay Neugeboren, a young novelist teaching there, invited me to meet with a group of his fellow faculty members who were among the forty-five that had taken a pledge for civil disobedience against the war in Vietnam. With the permission of Jay and Professor Charles Stein at whose home this meeting was held, I brought along four men and women who had been attending a week-long conference on Urban Education sponsored by Stanford University and Ford Foundation.

Since I had been very controversial in the opening address the very first afternoon, both on the subject of Black Power for Ghetto Schools, and for civil disobedience to gain the ends of civil rights and peace, a number of the guests and speakers asked to attend the meeting of the faculty group. Though I had cleared it with my hosts, I took along only four guests.

They listened critically at first, then just attentively and toward the end quite emotionally as the professors, old and young, men and women, debated bail or jail. Slowly they became involved, were trapped into asking questions and before long were offering suggestions. One of them refused to be taken in by our "martyrdom." He turned it into a psychological weapon against us and placed many of us on the defensive. Some retorted in much less than the spirit of pacifism. But cynical as he was, he began to offer alternatives. He became involved if not yet committed, and gave us some concrete suggestions about tax refusal that actually divided our group.

The professors had done it to him with their own acts of conscience. A number were still out on bail at the moment. They made him deliberate with himself, feeling-wise, and come up on the right side. His first act of protest would not be on our level but it would widen the base so more of us could gather at the apex, the point of civil disobedience. In fact it may well be that he is responsible for this article,

for in the restaurant much later that night he refused to share the check with the exclamation, "You gave me the experience of my life."

The Over-Aged Must Back The Young

At the faculty meeting our action calendar was advanced. WRL pacifists were well represented, both the younger group organized for draft resistance by David Harris, now our regional secretary, and our older executives who have already gathered a long list of prominent names to support and associate themselves with these draft resisters. The whole group felt that while those still eligible for the draft go beyond the personal witness of conscientious objection into the more political and provocative position of draft resistance, the men and women not subject to the draft should organize their own independent, analagous and complementary acts of civil disobedience. If anything, the older exempt generation owes a stronger commitment to peace and draft resistance than do the young men.

The young are really entitled to their way out, to Canada, Mexico, job deferment or sheer desertion. They need bear no share of the burden of war in a racially and ideologically divided world. Some, not unlike Private Slovik who was executed for desertion in World War II, first such case since the Civil War, have not the slightest understanding of why people should be forced and driven to kill one another. College men can at least offer the verbal expressions of school and church to a draft board or army officer but what about the poor boy, the dropout who can only stutter in the words of fear, of aggression as a pattern of defense, of desperation through desertion? "Who speaks for these young boys?" I asked a Queens draft board, "the children who never learned the vocabulary of conscientious objection, religious scruples, or substitutes for the supreme deity?"

The Stanford Professors Have Acted

It is our job to protect these youngsters from killing as well as being killed. It is our job to drive the meaning of this barbarous war deep into the conscience of America so it saves its own honor even as it saves the souls of our young men, to say nothing of their lives and those of their victims in a foreign land. It is the generation of World War II and beyond who must make their own sacrifice if our humanity is to deserve another chance. While the young mobilize for The Resistance on October 16, we older persons should lead the way until then and thereafter with our own independent acts of civil disobedience.

The professors at Stanford University have not waited for October 16 though they plan to be very much involved on that day too. They have already participated in a sit-down at the induction center at Oakland, California on June 29. While they demonstrated the spirit of nonviolence by serving coffee and doughnuts to the inductees at 6:00 a.m., they nevertheless, made the youngest climb over their bodies in order to get inside the induction center. By 7:00 a.m., 20 were arrested; this time it was bail quickly raised at the campus but now the debate is on "jail without bail" while they move the whole west coast with their dramatic confrontation of government, press, and community.

CD Must Be Stepped-Up

We have to follow suit here and work up to a major act of civil disobedience that may make the occasion as historic in its own right as November 11, Veterans Day. Suggestions have been made to combine demonstration and civil disobedience to the point of closing down the Pentagon or induction centers in at least ten of our larger cities. If waves of war resisters went in for civil disobedience, every hour on the hour we could make an impact that might be world-wide and set a new spiritual level to man's quest of peace.

Not all pacifists are ready for civil disobedience, jail or worse. It takes both time and effort to reach that point. Some march or parade to it, some stand a lonely vigil or fast, but as a young and lovely girl said at a church meeting in San Francisco, "I'll know I'm ready when I go to the jail with joy." Then indeed prison will be a wider world for the spread of truth and the state of man. It is not inconceivable for a warden to make a pacifist's bed.

Fortunately, we can do more than hold up the hands of our draft resisters. Some of us can place ourselves between them and the federal marshal or stand by them at the trial even to the point of "contempt of court." We can invite joint arrest.

We can develop creative acts that disorder the process of war, the manufacture and transportation of munitions, the induction of draftees, the manipulation of "consent," the anonymity of guilt. We can serve our country best by exposing her dishonor, by draping the Statue of Liberty in black. Thus Ross Flanagan is maintaining a "Quaker presence within the Treasury Department in Washington and Richard Hathaway is leading a Hiroshima Day Pilgrimage To Montreal to bring our funds for medical supplies to *all* parts of Vietnam, an act in direct violation of U.S. State Department but very much in conformity with the Geneva Convention of 1949. Our methods work, only we need to apply them more intensely, now.

ATTENTION GRADUATE STUDENTS

There never has been a detailed history of WRL compiled with material from the date of its formation in 1923 to the present time. The staff would be delighted to work closely with any graduate student who should want to write a masters thesis on WRL—its birth, development, internal conflicts, and accomplishments. It is possible that if the thesis were well written, funds could be found to have it published (even if it were "painfully objective"). But whether or not it were published, it would be photostated and made available to any other scholars doing research on the peace movement and WRL.

HIROSHIMA DAY—1967

Hiroshima Day at Expo 67 has been designated Youth Joy Peace Day and is being marked by a major peace rally to be addressed by Norman Thomas, Paul Goodman, Julian Bond, Thich Nhat Hahn, etc. In conjunction, the New York Workshop in Nonviolence is conducting a walk from the Canadian border to Montreal and a group of individuals is planning a motorcade from New York to deliver funds for medical supplies to the Canadian Quakers for transmission to North Vietnam.

The Quaker Action Committee, which is planning for a second sailing of the *Phoenix* from Hiroshima with medical supplies, is marking Hiroshima Day as the start of a week-long vigil at the Pentagon in Washington.

In New York, the Fifth Avenue Parade Committee is sponsoring a march and rally on Saturday, the day before Hiroshima Day. A march and rally are scheduled in Atlanta by the Workshop in Nonviolence there. The anniversary of the first atomic bombing is being observed in a number of other cities across the country.

JOIN THE BUTTON BRIGADE

WRL Broken Rifle Button

ND Button (nuclear disarmament symbol) each 10c: 15/$1; 100/$5

WRL Broken Rifle Pin on heavy metal

ND Pin black enamel on steel

each 75c